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Furman University

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Technology, flexibility keys to Younts Conference Center's appeal

With the opening of Younts Conference Center in April, Furman took a major step in its outreach efforts to the Greenville community and the general public.

As Kay Cornelison, director of the Younts Center, says, "Our goal is to promote the use of Furman and its many assets." And the 13,000-square-foot Younts Center, named for Greenville attorney Melvin Younts '50 and his wife, Dollie, a Columbia College graduate, is designed to do just that.

A key selling point for the building, whose main hall accommodates up to 400 and can be sub-divided for smaller gatherings, is its cutting-edge technology. Large screens and projectors are available at the touch of a button — then disappear into the ceiling when not in use. Touch pads control all lighting and sound.

"We can handle any technology needs, including video conferencing, but it never detracts from the simple elegance of the facility," Cornelison says. She adds that the center's flexibility makes it attractive for everything from wedding receptions to business meetings, large dinners and other events. It will also help relieve demand on other established campus spots such as McAlister Auditorium, Hartness Pavilion, Timmons Arena and the amphitheater.

Younts is located on the southeast end of campus next to Cherrydale, the university's alumni house, and sports two companion outdoor facilities that offer additional entertainment options: the 1,600-square-foot DeSantis Pavilion and the Max and Trude Heller Terrace.

The DeSantis Pavilion, which was dedicated in May, honors Blaine DeSantis '75, an attorney and Pennsylvania native, and his wife, Magdalena. The Heller Terrace, dedicated in August, is named for the former Greenville mayor and his wife, longtime Furman supporters.

To handle the additional events expected to come Furman's way with the opening of the Younts Center, Mike Arnold, who joined the university staff in 1997 as director of Timmons Arena, now serves as executive director of conference



The Younts Center opened in the spring, seven months ahead of schedule, and is expected to attract customers ranging from wedding and conference planners to area businesses and alumni.



and event services. Todd Duke, who has helped manage Timmons for seven years, is associate director. Marie Burgess, director of summer camps and conferences, works out of the Younts Center as well, moving over from the Department of Continuing Education.

Dedication ceremonies for the Younts Center will be held September 24.

